



The Core

APPL Rules & Regulations

1. Hosting

Any league participant may host an event, but should have at least 5 games in good working order. The games to be included in the tournament lineup must be disclosed 7 days prior to the event. The chosen games should not include any potentially “marathon” games. In the event of a machine failure, a “pinch hitter” game should be available if needed. The host will determine the start time, and should take into account that each event will have a 1-hour warm-up/social period, followed by a players meeting, and then the actual tournament.

2. Game Setup

Tournament games should be set in “Tournament Mode” or “Contest Mode” whenever possible, and ‘Game Restart’ must be disabled. Any games that allow a “buy-in” or “buy an extra ball” feature must have these features disabled. If a machine is set to award a replay, the award must not be an extra ball or points. Extra balls rewarded for attaining certain score levels are not allowed. All solid-state games should be set for 3 ball play. EM pinball machines that do not allow for easy selection of this feature may be left at 5 balls per game.

3. Banned Games

The following list of games has been compiled by the APPL administration team to filter out those titles which don’t lend themselves well to tournament play. Games that meet the criteria for inclusion on the list are: games which have excessively long ball times, games which have unbalanced scoring or gambling features, and games which have a high degree of random luck or novelty attributes.

Baby Pac-Man
Batman Forever
Bugs Bunny’s Birthday Ball
Guns N’ Roses
High Roller Casino
Indiana Jones (WMS)
Jackbot
Lord of the Rings
Mr. & Mrs. Pac-Man
NBA Fastbreak
Orbitor 1
Safe Cracker
The Machine: Bride of Pinbot
The Simpsons Pinball Party

This list may fluctuate over time, and is by no means hard and fast. Should a member wish to use a blacklisted game when hosting an event, he may submit a request to the APPL administration team for further review. If the argument shows compelling evidence to suggest the validity of using a certain title, the game may be included in a tournament and removed from the list.

4. Fees

Fees are \$10 per tournament for those that will host an event during the season or \$20 per tournament for all others. Members will be expected to pay the full \$20 fee per event until an event is hosted by that member, at which time \$10 per event played will be refunded.

5. Prizes (end of season)

“A” Division

1st: 35% of purse, trophy, and title of "2009 APPL Champion"
2nd: 20% of purse
3rd: 15% of purse

“B” Division

1st: 10% of purse and trophy
2nd: 7.5% of purse
3rd: 5% of purse

The balance of the purse will be used for the trophy fund and APPL administrative costs. The overall purse may be reduced if necessary to meet these needs. Excess funds will be added back to the purse.

The winner of the "B" division must move up to the "A" division the following year. Any player in "A" whose season total would not have garnered an award in "B" may choose to drop down to the "B" division for the following season.

6. Attendance

Participants should make every attempt to be in attendance at the start of the tournament. The one hour warm-up periods are not mandatory and may be skipped if the player wishes to forfeit this opportunity. Late arrivals may be denied a tournament entry if the league administration feels that the prospective entry would unnecessarily prolong the event.

7. Scoring

Everyone plays each game in the tournament once. The highest score on an individual game is assigned 100 points. All other scores are a fractional percentage of the highest score on each game. These scores are summed to determine the tournament winner. Each tournament will be equally weighted throughout the course of the season. To determine a weighted event score, the cumulative event score will be divided by the number of games used. The player's lowest individual tournament score for the season will be dropped, and the rest of the stops on the tour will be summed to determine player standings.

7. Scoring (continued)

In lieu of dropping one event score, a participant may choose to miss an event altogether for personal reasons. Further missed events will be subject to an end of season scoring penalty. The event score assigned for the absence will be the player's average played event score for the season minus 20%. Each additional missed event will incur this stackable 20% penalty. See the illustration below

Suppose Tommy attends the first two APPL events, and scores 20 & 30 points respectively. He then misses the next two events. To determine his penalty score, we must apply the rules stated above. Event 3 was his first absence, so it will be a non-factor in his season total. It is his dropped score. Event 4 was also missed, so it will incur the 20% penalty. $((20 + 30)/2) \times 0.8 = 20$ points

Event 1	Event 2	Event 3	Event 4
20	30		20

If Tommy misses another event, his event scores will further decay due to the stackable 20% penalty. $((20 + 30)/2) \times 0.6 = 15$ points

Event 1	Event 2	Event 3	Event 4	Event 5
20	30		15	15

If Tommy attended event 5 instead and scored 40 points, the numbers are as follows: $((20 + 30 + 40)/3) \times 0.8 = 24$ points.

Event 1	Event 2	Event 3	Event 4	Event 5
20	30		24	40

From the examples above, it can be seen that penalty scores may vary over the course of a season dependent upon the player's performance and attendance. Missed event scores will not decay to less than 20%.

During a tournament, all individual game scores must be validated. When a game is completed, the player must alert one of the designated scorekeepers to record the score. At that time, the player will also initial the recorded score, thereby acknowledging that it has been recorded accurately. In the event that a player does not comply with the official data collection method, he will receive zero points for the game.

8. Malfunctions and Rulings

A. The Nature of Pinball

The unique charm of pinball lies, in large part, in the physical nature of the game. Unfortunately, this means that unusual events and outright malfunctions cannot be prevented, nor can they be perfectly compensated for. The **APPL** attempts to strike a balance between compensating for malfunctions and accepting the physical nature of the game.

8. Malfunctions and Rulings (continued)

B. Minor Malfunctions

A minor malfunction is any incident without external cause which deviates from the normal course of gameplay, without directly causing a player's loss of turn and without providing any player a significant advantage over others. A minor malfunction is considered part of normal play. Tournament officials shall determine what constitutes a significant advantage; in the event that such an advantage is obtained; refer to "Beneficial Malfunctions".

A minor malfunction that occurs repeatedly, to the extent that it is markedly affecting play of the machine, may be considered a major malfunction at the sole discretion of tournament officials.

C. Major Malfunctions

A major malfunction is a gameplay problem with a machine that results in the premature loss of ball in play in a fashion that is not a normal feature of the machine's gameplay. These may be unusual one-time events, or they may indicate a recurring problem that will need to be addressed by technicians.

Examples of major malfunctions include:

- *The bonus count begins while the ball is still in play. This can happen if, for example, the machine loses track of how many balls are in the drain trough.*
- *A lit kickback fails to return the ball to play, ending the player's turn. This does not apply to other ball saving devices such as timed ball savers, ball traps, gates, or "virtual" kickbacks.*

Any malfunction that results in the loss of one or more balls during multiball play, without losing all balls so as to end the player's turn, will only be considered a minor malfunction. Loss of tilt warnings, without loss of ball, shall not be considered a major malfunction. Loss of any lit feature, running mode, or other gameplay specifics, shall not be considered a major malfunction.

When a major malfunction occurs, it is the player's responsibility to notify the scorekeeper, calmly and promptly. The scorekeeper will request advice from a tournament official. If the official(s) agree that the incident is a major malfunction, the player will be provided with one additional ball of play at the beginning of a new game, after the current game has been completed and score documented. No attempt will be made to re-establish the state of the machine at the time of the major malfunction. The player's total score on the additional ball of play will be added to his or her previous score, and the new game will be terminated.

At the request of the player, if and only if a tournament official approves, the major malfunction may instead be handled as follows. The current game will be terminated and the score recorded. A new game will be started, and after the appropriate number of balls has been played in the new game, the new score will be added to the old score to determine the player's total score, and the new game will be terminated. This approach is functionally similar to the previous paragraph, but may afford different strategic opportunities to the player. In no event will a player be allowed to abuse this rule through intentionally seeking a major malfunction.

8. Malfunctions and Rulings (continued)

If a major malfunction occurs early in the play of the first ball by the first player, tournament officials may rule that the current game is voided and the score discarded. Machine repairs will be attempted and the player will restart their game.

In the event that two or more major malfunctions take place during the same game, the current score of the player will be recorded, and the game terminated. Once the machine has been repaired, the player will be provided additional ball(s) of play on a new game, as necessary to provide the correct number of balls. Alternatively, tournament officials may choose to allow the affected player to replay the game from scratch, and the higher score for the player will be recorded as his or her official score, except in any case where the original score was unfairly improved by the malfunction or was significantly increased during attempts to investigate or cure the malfunction. In the event that a recurring major malfunction cannot suitably be repaired, the failure must be treated as a catastrophic malfunction.

Under certain specific conditions, a major malfunction may be declined by the player. This must be approved by the tournament official, and must not result in a situation which provides an unfair advantage to the player.

D. Known Malfunctions

Any malfunction or unusual behavior that is determined to be relatively minor but unusual enough to merit comment may, at the discretion of tournament officials, be posted for players to be aware of before playing the affected machine. Players who have played the machine before this notice is provided will not be allowed to replay the machine. The occurrence of any posted malfunction will be treated as a minor malfunction unless it worsens or interacts with another feature to yield a major malfunction.

E. Catastrophic Malfunctions

A catastrophic malfunction is any event, not caused by a player, which immediately ends play for all players on the machine.

Examples of catastrophic malfunctions include:

- *The game system crashes and/or resets due to a software error or component failure.*
- *Power is lost or interrupted.*
- *A new game starts.*
- *A major malfunction repeatedly recurs in spite of attempts to repair the machine.*

Any event caused by a player, intentionally or unintentionally, including slam tilts, is covered under "Player Errors" below.

When a catastrophic malfunction occurs, the current scores of the player will be recorded, and the game terminated. Once the machine has been repaired, the player will be provided additional ball(s) of play on a new game, as necessary to provide the correct number of balls of play. Alternatively, tournament officials may choose to allow the affected player to replay the game from scratch, and the higher score for each player will be recorded as his or her official score, except in any case where the original score was unfairly improved by the malfunction or was significantly increased during attempts to investigate or cure the malfunction.

8. Malfunctions and Rulings (continued)

If a machine affected by catastrophic malfunction cannot be repaired in order to continue play, it is considered disabled; please see "Disabled Machines".

F. Beneficial Malfunctions

Any malfunction which provides at least one player with a significant advantage over any other player competing on that machine is known as a beneficial malfunction. Tournament officials shall determine what constitutes a significant advantage.

Any beneficial malfunction which results in a player being able to continue play of a ball that normally should have ended is normally allowed once per game. Examples of this would include an unexpected software ball save, a ball that bounces back into play without player action, or a ball that comes to rest on an unlit kickback in the outlane. Any such behavior shall not be allowed if it repeats, meaning that tournament officials may require players to allow the repeatedly-saved ball to drain, or play on the machine may be terminated in accordance with catastrophic malfunction rules, at which point repairs may be attempted.

Any beneficial malfunction which provides one or more players with a significant scoring or strategic advantage in a way that is not part of normal gameplay will void the score of the affected player(s), unless all immediately-affected players and tournament officials can agree on a suitable adjustment of the score or other elimination of the advantage. If the beneficial malfunction has been specifically avoided by the player, it is unlikely that a penalty is necessary. If any player score(s) are voided, the affected player(s) may then replay the game after the other players have finished, and the new score(s) are used for the affected player(s).

Examples of beneficial malfunctions would include a jackpot switch that registers when a different target is hit, a valuable switch that scores repeatedly without the ball contacting it, a failed tilt sensor, or a ball stuck during multiball. See also "Stuck Balls".

Any situation which indicates the presence of a beneficial malfunction should be brought to the attention of the scorekeeper promptly, who will alert tournament officials. Any player who intentionally takes advantage of a significant beneficial malfunction may be given a warning and/or have his or her affected entry interrupted and disqualified by tournament officials.

G. Stuck Balls

During the course of play, it is possible for one or more balls to become stuck on a playfield feature, usually after becoming airborne. If this happens during single ball play, the player must wait for automatic ball searches to occur. The expiration of any timed feature during this period is not considered a malfunction.

If the stuck ball has not been freed after four such searches, or if the machine is not performing searches for some reason, the player must alert the scorekeeper, and a tournament official will be brought to the machine. The player must remain alert and at the machine, as he or she is responsible for the ball if it becomes freed at any point. Where possible, machines will be configured with "chase" features disabled, so that additional balls will not be released into play as a result of ball searches. However, in the event this occurs, the player is responsible for continuing play, and a suitable malfunction will only be ruled if the machine is unable to function normally from this point forward.

8. Malfunctions and Rulings (continued)

A tournament official may initially choose to try to free the stuck ball through judicious nudging, tapping, etc. The player must remain ready to resume play at the machine during this attempt. If actions by the official result in a tilt, this will be treated as a major malfunction (not the fault of the player). If the official frees the ball but the player does not successfully continue play, this is normal play (the fault of the player). Loss of tilt warnings due to tournament official nudging is considered normal play.

If the tournament official is unable to free the stuck ball, the machine will be opened, and the stuck ball freed and placed either in the plunger lane, if it is manually controlled, or on the upraised flipper of the player's choice, with the flipper button held by the player. In the event this is not possible, the official may select another location or feature where the ball can be placed safely while the machine is being closed in order to resume normal play. If more than one ball is stuck, all freed balls will be placed on the flipper(s) of the player's choice before play resumes, or in the plunger lane if the flippers are inactive while the machine is open.

If the ball is inadvertently freed while the machine is open and drains without the player regaining complete control (stopped on a flipper), this will be treated as a major malfunction. If the machine cannot be opened successfully, or if opening or closing the machine terminates the game(s) in progress for any reason, this will be treated as a catastrophic malfunction. If the ball is freed and the machine closed without the player's loss of ball, play continues as normal. If the game is in multiball play and one or more balls are lost as a result of freeing stuck balls, possibly ending multiball but not ending the ball in play, this will be considered no worse than a minor malfunction. If any feature or mode that is lit or active times out while one or more balls are stuck, this will not be considered a malfunction.

Any player who chooses to shake or bump the machine in order to free a stuck ball does so at his or her own risk. No allowance will be made for a player who tilts while attempting to free a stuck ball, whether or not tournament officials are present.

If a ball becomes stuck during a multiball mode, the player should attempt to trap the other ball(s) in play and request assistance. A stuck ball during multiball often represents a significant beneficial malfunction, and intentionally taking advantage may result in a penalty. Please note specifically that a ball ending up in the plunger lane during multiball on a machine where there is no autoplunger (or where the autoplunger for some reason refuses to fire) counts as a stuck ball. See "Beneficial Malfunctions" for further details.

Any player who misuses a game feature in order to intentionally trap a ball during a multiball mode, such as holding in the plunger on Tommy in order to defeat the autoplunger, may be given a warning and/or have his or her affected entry interrupted and disqualified by tournament officials.

In situations where a ball is trapped in a way that it can be released through player action other than shaking or bumping - for example, a ball at rest underneath a flipper which the player controls - this is not deemed to be a stuck ball. Balls trapped in this fashion during multiball modes are not generally considered to be a rules violation, although the ruling will depend on the exact machine and situation.

8. Malfunctions and Rulings (continued)

H. Disabled Machines

Any tournament machine that breaks down during play will be attended to by technicians as promptly as possible. In the event that a breakdown is severe and cannot be repaired promptly, the machine may be taken out of service temporarily or permanently. A permanently disabled machine may be replaced with a designated substitute by tournament officials.

Any player who has previously posted a qualifying score on the disabled machine must play a "make-up" game on a substitute machine; his or her resulting score will then replace the previous score on the disabled machine.

I. Player Errors

A player error is any player action, purposeful or accidental, which affects the normal play or outcome of a game in progress.

Any player who tilts his or her ball in play will not receive any penalty other than the normal loss of ball. Note that some older machines may penalize the player with loss of game; this is equivalent to tilting all remaining balls in order. Abuse of machines is covered under "Player Conduct".

Any player who "slam tilts" a machine, will receive a score of zero for that game.

Any player who deliberately interferes with the play of another player, through distraction, touching the machine or player, or disrupting tournament procedures, will receive a score of zero for the game. Any repeated offense under this rule will result in ejection of the player from the tournament. Any non-player, or tournament participant not playing in the game in progress, which deliberately interferes with the play of any tournament game, will be given one warning. On the second offense, the offender will be ejected from the facility.

Accidental interference is regrettable but can happen. Any player or non-player who accidentally interferes with the play of any tournament game will be warned. If the interference was sufficient to cause the loss of ball, this will be treated as a major malfunction. If the interference terminated play for all players (for example, tripping over a power cord and pulling it from the wall), this will be treated as a catastrophic malfunction.

Tournament officials will be the sole determiners of what constitutes interference and whether or not it is accidental or deliberate. Scorekeepers are strongly encouraged to watch for and, if possible, prevent incidents of interference.

J. Rulings

Rulings shall be made by tournament officials, which include event coordinators and any person(s) designated as officials by the coordinators. Designated officials may have restrictions on the breadth of rulings, and may be overridden by tournament officials. Any designated official or event coordinator is excluded from ruling on any play situation that directly affects his or her actual or potential standing as a player. Such persons may also be recused where their decision affects a close friend or family member, at the sole discretion of other tournament officials.

8. Malfunctions and Rulings (continued)

The APPL accepts all feedback and constructive criticism, including player complaints, without reservations. However, please recognize that The APPL strives to be fair even in the most difficult situations. Complaints will be taken seriously, ruled upon, and considered resolved. There is to be *no whining* :-)

9. Interference, Collusion, and Cheating

Any player who intentionally interferes with tournament play or otherwise disrupts the tournament setting will be warned and/or ejected from the tournament, at the discretion of tournament officials.

Any form of cheating, including game restarts, tampering with games, tampering with recorded results, scorekeeper intimidation or collusion, or anything else not covered here, will be addressed by tournament officials as appropriate, including disqualification and/or ejection from the tournament.

Any collaborative effort between players in an attempt to unfairly affect the outcome of the competition, or to "lock out" a third player, or to otherwise refrain from making the best possible competitive effort on each and every game played, will be looked upon very poorly by tournament officials, and may result in disciplinary action, including disqualification and/or ejection from the tournament.

10. Death Saves, Bangbacks, etc.

Techniques known as "Death Saves" and "Bangbacks" are sometimes practiced by certain advanced players. Because the effectiveness of these techniques varies from machine to machine and because of the risk of injury to either player or machine, these are banned from tournament play. In the event that a drained ball bounces back into play without deliberate or significant player action, the ball may be played. This may require a ruling from tournament officials if there appears to be abusive force employed by the player.

11. Free Play / Social Play

The host of the tournament has the option, at their discretion, after the tournament, to open the floor to Free Play/Social Play. This will only be allowed after "ALL" players have finished their tournament games and all scores have been recorded. Any machine that is not included in the tournament must remain "off-limits" until the floor has been opened up by tournament officials. Any player that disregards this rule will be warned and subject to exclusion from future tournaments.

Some rules adapted with permission from PAPA.org